

COMMUNITIES ON TAP

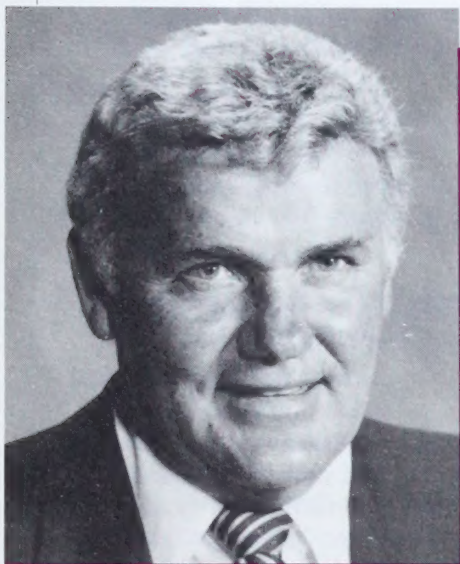
TOURISM ACTION PLAN NEWSLETTER

VOLUME ONE

NUMBER THREE

DECEMBER, 1988

MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER



Alberta communities are taking up the challenge and are setting goals for new business opportunities in their community!

In March of this year, Alberta Tourism introduced the Community Tourism Action Program -- a \$30 million initiative designed to strengthen and stimulate local tourism resources. As a result of the program, an increasing number of Alberta communities are now developing local Community Tourism Action Plans.

To date, twenty-nine communities with formally endorsed

Tourism Action Plans have registered with Alberta Tourism. These communities, as well as their not-for-profit and private sectors, are now eligible for funding under the Community Tourism Action Program. Guidelines for determining a community's eligibility for funding are found in the previous edition of this newsletter -- "Communities on Tap", Volume one, number two, July 1988. Complete information on the funding program may be obtained by contacting the Tourism Funding Task Force, at 422-9507 in Edmonton.

Communities should consider Program funding as somewhat of a "jump start": a catalyst to development action. Create a comprehensive community-generated Tourism Action Plan first. Then begin to consider the funding program. Don't let potential funding drive your Plan. Develop a good Tourism Action Plan and then decide where funds might best be used to achieve your objectives.

As Minister of Tourism, I strongly support the province-wide development of high quality Community Tourism Action Plans. Alberta Tourism provides extensive assistance to any community developing a Tourism Action Plan. In this newsletter, you will find a complete listing of these services.

Careful planning is the key factor in establishing tourism as a viable local industry. A realistic Community Tourism Action Plan, developed with the support of the entire community, can result in economic rewards which far

outweigh any short-term gains that initial program funding may provide.

In order to ensure that your tourism projects are viable, it is important to carry out a thorough economic analysis of each of your capital development objectives. This economic analysis should be built into the Action Steps for every capital project contained within your Tourism Action Plan. Furthermore, this analysis should consider initial capital outlay as well as ongoing operation and maintenance costs. These costs should then be compared to the revenue that the project is expected to generate over the next five year period.

This newsletter is a forum for information exchange on the Community Tourism Action Plan program. In this issue, an article on the Town of Sylvan Lake highlights some of the tourism successes the community has enjoyed through developing and implementing a Community Tourism Action Plan. Sylvan Lake was the first community in Alberta to have a formally endorsed Tourism Action Plan. Congratulations to the people of Sylvan Lake! Your Tourism Action Plan will benefit your community for years to come.

Sincerely,

Don Sparrow
MINISTER OF TOURISM

PLAN DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE PROVIDED BY ALBERTA TOURISM

Alberta Tourism offers a variety of instructional sessions and support services to communities developing Tourism Action Plans. The following pages provide an initial overview of this assistance followed by detailed accounts of individual session offerings and useful Department contacts.

SESSIONS

SESSION I - TOURISM AWARENESS PRESENTATION

For those attempting to create awareness of the value of tourism as a community industry. This session is designed to help develop a Tourism Action Committee which will assume responsibility for preparing a Community Tourism Action Plan.

SESSION II - INTRODUCTORY COMMUNITY TOURISM ACTION PLAN PRESENTATION

This session initiates work on the first step of the process -- developing Tourism Market Profiles. Its intent is to help familiarize Tourism Action Committees with the

Community Tourism Action Plan process.

SESSION III - TOURISM ACTION PLAN WORKSHOP

A two-day workshop on developing a complete draft Tourism Action Plan. This workshop is facilitated by Alberta Tourism staff, or **CONSULTANTS - TRAINED AND PAID FOR BY ALBERTA TOURISM.**

ADDITIONAL SERVICES

REVIEW OF DRAFT TOURISM ACTION PLAN

Once a draft plan has been completed to the satisfaction of the Community Tourism Action Committee, it may then be forwarded directly to Alberta Tourism for review and comment.

ASSISTANCE WITH PUBLIC INPUT PROCEDURE

Alberta Tourism staff will attend the required public meeting to introduce the program. Staff will also attend the subsequent Tourism Action Committee meeting to aid with revisions resulting from public input.

TOURISM ACTION PLAN REGISTRATION

Once completed Plans have been formally endorsed and sent to Alberta Tourism, Department staff will review them to ensure that all registration guidelines have been followed.

ANNUAL TOURISM ACTION PLAN REVIEW

Alberta Tourism staff will assist Tourism Action Review Committees with the annual review of their Plans.

COMMUNITY TOURISM ACTION PROGRAM FUNDING

Alberta Tourism staff will assist in the interpretation of funding guidelines and completion of application forms.

TEAM TOURISM FUNDING PROGRAM

Alberta Tourism staff will assist in the interpretation of funding guidelines and will direct interested parties to the appropriate contact within their tourist zone.

COMMUNITY TOURISM ACTION PLAN ASSISTANCE PROVIDED BY ALBERTA TOURISM

1 Session I - Tourism Awareness Presentation (slide presentation)

This session is particularly useful for communities that wish to instill enthusiasm for this industry and to more clearly understand the importance of tourism at the community level.

The community is expected to organize this meeting and invite as many people as possible, including business people, the local Chamber of Commerce, Recreation Board, tourist event/attraction operators, historical society, etc.

To arrange for this presentation, please contact the Industry Relations and Training Branch at 427-7612. (minimum 25 people per session).



2. Follow-up Assistance to Session I

At the end of a Session I presentation, a Tourism Action Plan Committee is usually formed to develop and implement a Tourism Action Plan.

In some cases, communities may already have a Committee formed and are ready to work on a Plan. If this is the case, a community can directly request a Session II presentation.

Before a Session II presentation, each Tourism Action Committee member will receive from Alberta Tourism, a copy of the **Community Tourism Action Plan Manual**. This manual is specifically geared to assisting communities with local-level tourism development.

Tourism Action Committee members will be given one to two weeks to review the manual. This period of review is necessary to help prepare for the Session II meeting.

3. Session II: Introductory Community Tourism Action Plan Presentation

The community organizes this session, which lasts about three hours.

Generally three to four weeks advance notice is required to schedule a Session II meeting. (Staff resources at Alberta Tourism are limited and usually booked well ahead of time.)

A large room is needed for this session. To allow for the presentation of a Sample Plan, a large amount of blank wall space must also be made available.

The first hour to an hour-and-a-half is required to go through the **Community Tourism Action Plan Manual** and the Sample Plan in detail. Recently announced funding program guidelines are also reviewed at this stage.

Following a short break, work commences on Step 1: Present Tourism Market Profiles Chart. This segment lasts approximately one hour.

Responsibility for the Present Tourism Market Profiles Chart is then passed to the Tourism Action Committee. Completion of the chart usually requires an additional two to three hour meeting of the Committee.

4. Session III - Tourism Action Plan Workshop

At this point, the Community can do one of two things. It can continue to work on the Draft Plan at its own pace, or it can request a staff or **CONSULTANT-FACILITATED WORKSHOP PAID FOR BY ALBERTA TOURISM**. These workshops are on the average one-and-a-half to two days in length.

Each consultant hired for these workshops has received special training from our staff. This ensures that each community develops the best quality Plan possible.

It should be emphasized that the consultants or staff members only "facilitate". They do not do the Plan. That responsibility lies with the Tourism Action Committee.

If a community wishes a Session III workshop, they should let Alberta Tourism staff know at their Session II meeting. A formal letter outlining two or three options for preferred two day workshop periods (including weekends if more convenient for communities) should follow the verbal request as soon as possible.

Again, expect to schedule a Session III workshop three to four weeks ahead of time.

The community is expected to provide a meeting facility, flow pens, tape, flip charts, etc. Coffee and a light lunch on both days should also be brought

directly into the meeting room.

By the end of the second day, a series of flip charts containing the draft plan should be completed.

At this point, the facilitator's input is complete.

The Committee then types up their Draft Plan and distributes it to their members for final review and polishing.

5. Send Draft Plan to Alberta Tourism

Prior to sending the Draft Plan to the Municipal Council for Approval in Principle, a copy should be sent to Alberta Tourism. Our staff will review your Plan, add their comments and suggestions and then return it to your Committee as quickly as possible.



6. Assistance with Public Input Procedure

Once the Municipal Council has given its Approval in Principle to the Tourism Action Plan, public input must be obtained.

Alberta Tourism has developed a thorough public input process to ensure that each draft Tourism Action Plan receives the public input and support that it requires to succeed.

If possible, Alberta Tourism will also attend the public meeting to introduce the program.

Once public input has been received, Alberta Tourism staff will be available to help Committees revise their Draft Plan and prepare it for formal endorsement by Municipal Council.

7. Tourism Action Plan Registration

Once a Plan has been formally endorsed by the Municipal Council, it should be sent to Alberta Tourism for registration.

Alberta Tourism staff will review the Plan to ensure that all the Registration Guidelines have been completed (see "Communities on T.A.P.", Newsletter, Volume 1, No. 2, Page 3).

Any irregularities in the Plan will be noted and specific instructions for their correction suggested. The Plan will then be returned to the community for revisions.

Plans meeting all the necessary requirements will be registered with Alberta Tourism. Committees in charge of registered plans will then receive a personal letter from the Minister of Tourism confirming their status and eligibility for funding allocations under the Community Tourism Action Program.



8. Annual Tourism Action Plan Review

Alberta Tourism strongly recommends that a community review its Plan on an annual basis in order to keep it up-to-date.

Alberta Tourism will assist the Committee in this process if requested.

Assistance with the preceding (Steps 2 through 8), is available by contacting the Community Assistance Branch of Alberta Tourism. Phone 427-4340.

9. Community Tourism Action Program Funding

Once your plan has been registered, Alberta Tourism will provide CTAP information on the Funding Program (ie., what's applicable, how to fill out forms, etc.)

If you need assistance with this program, contact the Tourism Funding Task Force at 422-9507.

Remember to include Action Steps for appropriate economic analysis in order to determine the viability of the capital development objectives/projects considered in your plan.

10. Team Tourism Funding Program

The Team Tourism Program administered by the 14 Tourist Zones, provides funding for community tourism marketing strategies.

It would be to the community's advantage to take those objectives that appear under your "To Improve Tourism Promotion" goals and ask your Tourist Zone to incorporate them into its Regional Marketing Plan. This will ensure that promotion or marketing projects that result from your Tourism Action Plan are eligible for funds under this program.

For information on this program, call the Tourism Funding Task Force at 422-9507.

Alberta Tourism staff are always available to answer your questions on any facet of the Community Tourism Action Plan Program. In addition, this quarterly Newsletter is published to provide communities with relevant program information and a network of community contacts.

Once your community commences actual implementation of their Tourism Action Plan, you may require advice on a particular project. Do not hesitate to phone Alberta Tourism staff for input or expertise if this is the case.

The Department strongly supports the implementation of Tourism Action Plans throughout the Province. Unless Plan objectives are implemented, a Community Tourism Action Plan becomes nothing more than another unrealized opportunity. Remember the key word in this whole process is "Action"!

Good Luck in Developing your tourism industry and do not hesitate to call for assistance.



TOWN OF SYLVAN LAKE

Tourism Action Plan Focuses Community Attention on Their Tourism Industry



Sylvan Lake on September long weekend.

On June 9, 1986 the Town of Sylvan Lake became the first Alberta community to have its elected officials formally endorse a Tourism Action Plan. Under the leadership of the Tourism Action Committee, the entire community, including the business sector and Municipal Council, have accomplished a number of objectives and are working diligently towards implementing those that remain.

Ms. Susan Samson, Tourism Action Committee Chairperson, says their Tourism Action Plan provides the framework, procedures and clear objectives necessary to create a realistic tourism promotion and development strategy for the town. She believes that the Plan, devel-

oped under the Community Tourism Action Plan process with staff resources provided by Alberta Tourism, enabled the community to focus its energies on its tourism industry. This has allowed Sylvan Lake easier access to funds both internally and from other funding sources.

Some of the objectives/projects accomplished or under development within the Sylvan Lake Tourism Action Plan include the following:

- development of a Children's Festival (in response to a need for more special events);
- construction of a combination lighthouse-tourist information centre (a project completed using town funds);
- completion of a Tourism Marketing Plan which has not only helped to target markets, but highlighted the need for further studies on the town's potential markets;
- presentation of a number of tourism awareness seminars for residents and service employees (intentions are to continue this program on a regular basis);
- the hiring of consultants to initiate work on a Downtown Beautification project commencing in the Spring of 1989;



Beach Road private businesses benefiting from influx of tourists



Provisions of numerous private sector activity opportunities is one of the major reasons for Sylvan Lake's success.

- construction of three major signs on the highways leading into Sylvan Lake as well as the development of two large billboard signs; and
- in cooperation with Alberta Recreation and Parks, development of a plan for upgrading and improving the lakeside Provincial Park.

In summary, Chairperson Sue Samson says that "the development of a Tourism Action Plan made the private sector businesses -- and the community as a whole -- realize that they were involved in Tourism in a big way." Ms. Samson credits the Community Tourism Action Plan with creating this new awareness of tourism's true economic value to Sylvan Lake.

If you wish more information regarding Sylvan Lake's Tourism Action Plan, you may do so by contacting:

*Ms. Sue Samson, Chairperson
Sylvan Lake Tourism Action
Committee
Box 70
Sylvan Lake, Alberta
TOM 1ZO*

Alberta
TOURISM